

Ribbon Cutting statement:

As Mayor of Madison, I am pleased to welcome you to the official reopening of the Madison Municipal Complex basement level. When raw sewage bubbled up through the pipes and flooded the offices housed in this area nearly two years ago, the employees who worked here had to scramble for new desks and workspace. Since that time, the employees of Planning, Engineering & Building; Revenue; and Information Technology have continued their work from borrowed offices, storage closets, and temporary buildings in the parking lot. They have performed admirably, and I am proud to say that the teamwork our city employees have shown—both those who were displaced by the flood and others (including the City Council) who sacrificed desks and offices to provide workspace for their colleagues—is an example of public service at its best. Despite the cramped, chaotic working conditions and the long wait for new offices, our people have maintained a level of service to the community that belies the difficulty of the situation. On behalf of the City of Madison and our dedicated employees, I thank you for joining us today to officially reopen these doors.

Press Conference text

The reopening of the lower level of Madison's Municipal Complex is a great example of the positive changes taking place in our city. Through strong leadership, careful management of resources, and economic development initiatives; we are putting the City of Madison on track for long-term success.

As we enter the second year of this administration, we must remember the clear message sent by the voters who elected us: control of our city should be *here*. This administration was empowered to take control back from the developers and make growth pay for itself. We have done that, and now, we are faced with another momentous decision: will we continue to maintain the *status quo*, or move forward with real progress?

Our partners in progress include the Madison and Limestone County Commissioners, local Chambers of Commerce, our state and federal delegation, the Governor's office, and area business and community leaders; but the most important partners are those who will live in the City we are building and become its leaders: Madison's youth. Thirty percent of our residents—that's *eleven thousand people*—are children under the age of eighteen, and it is vital that such a large segment of our population become engaged in the community.

Last year, I was proud to present the first Mayor's Scholarship Award for Academic Excellence, formally recognizing the academic achievements of four remarkable young people in Madison schools. That was just the beginning. I have recently contacted the principals of Madison's schools to

make myself available for programs and events that benefit our youth, and I have had the pleasure of participating in classroom activities and school events throughout Madison. I intend to continue working closely with teachers, principals, and community leaders to involve Madison's youth in community activities. I strongly believe that young people are our most valuable resource, and I am committed to providing them every opportunity to get involved in city government and develop the leadership skills they will need as they grow into the adults who will shape Madison's future.

In order to build Madison into the kind of hometown where our kids will want to live, work, and raise their families, we need two things: careful planning and the means to implement those plans. We have a solid plan for the City of Madison to improve our infrastructure and build this City into a place that can not only sustain its population but also provide an exceptional quality of life. With streets and sidewalks designed to accommodate increased vehicle and pedestrian traffic, parks and greenways that invite active outdoor life, and public facilities we can be proud of, Madison will grow into a model city for others to aspire to.

On November 8th, we will decide whether to provide the means to implement that plan. When we go to the polls to vote on the proposed 7.2 mill tax increase in the November 8th referendum, we will be choosing not *whether* Madison will continue to grow, but *how* it will grow. If we reject the tax referendum, our rapid growth rate combined with the thousands of new residents who will be arriving here soon due to BRAC-related job relocations will overwhelm our roads, public safety, and recreation facilities; and the quality of life we have come to expect will decline. However, if the referendum passes, we will pay just \$72 more per year on each \$100,000

of value on our homes to build \$49 million worth of urgently-needed streets, sidewalks, and public facilities for our City.

I believe wholeheartedly that this Capital Improvement Plan is an investment in Madison's future that we *must* make, and I am committed to seeing it through. If you share my vision of Madison as a healthy, thriving community that we can all be proud to call home, I urge you to join me in making that vision a reality by voting YES on November 8th.
